

## Case Study

### **“The Options Seem Limitless”: Installing MedcomSoft Record in a Pediatric Specialty Clinic**

#### **Practice Profile: Dr. Saied Dallalzadeh, Pediatric Gastroenterology**

##### **Customer:**

Dr. Saied Dallalzadeh is a pediatric gastroenterologist. After residency and specialty fellowship in New York, Dr. Dallal (as he is known to his patients) established a practice in California's San Fernando Valley in 1991. “For a single-doctor practice in this specialty, we are a very busy office,” says Dr. Dallal. He sees 10 to 15 children a day, all requiring high-degrees of care.

##### **Challenge:**

Dr. Dallal has relied on technology to document patient visits since he opened his office. “We were computerized even then. We started using word processors and Word Perfect to take notes.” As healthcare information technology evolved, Dr. Dallal became increasingly technical himself. “I even created my own EMR program by using MS Access, creating forms and making bi-directional links among them,” says Dr. Dallal. “Because I could not find a system that better suited my needs, we used the system I designed.” But as HIPAA regulations came into effect, he needed a compliant system. “Initially, I purchased a widely known electronic medical record (EMR), but I came to learn that the program was not well designed for a physician in my position: a specialty that requires a great deal of precise and accurate information in the databases.” The database in Dr. Dallal's first EMR was essentially developed by the provider. “Because I was populating my own database with findings from each new patient visit, after a time, each note began to be similar, but my patients are not routine cases. Each child's situation is so different, relying on the work I'd done yesterday to describe the encounter I would have tomorrow simply would not suffice.”

A technologically sophisticated EMR user, Dr. Dallal also had great expectations of support from his EMR partner. “The service I received from the other vendor was spotty. I would make suggestions to improve the product, but whether they were disinterested in their user's opinion or simply too poorly organized to get things done, I cannot say.”

After just a few months—“and hundreds and hundreds of hours trying to make it work in my clinic” — Dr. Dallal stopped using it. Despite a significant investment, he decided not to jeopardize the quality of his patient data. Despite this experience, Dr. Dallal began investigating a new system right away.

##### **What is Medcin?**

**A hierarchical, numerically codified nomenclature designed to facilitate the capture of qualitative and quantitative medical data at the point of care, Medcin has been under development for more than 25 years. Featuring 280,000 discrete terms, Medcin reflects the clinical experiences of scores of physicians from institutions such as Johns Hopkins, Cornell, Harvard, and others. Each Medcin term is linked to clinically related terms, resulting in a comprehensive web of more than 73 million SOAP links, useful for decision support and intelligent prompting.**

## **Solution:**

Dr. Dallal's initial thought was to more fully develop an EMR of his own. Working in partnership with a respected computer programmer, Dr. Dallal evaluated "at least 60, and probably closer to 80" different EMR products. "As we researched different systems and gathered ideas, the features and functions that would make our home-grown EMR the best tool possible grew increasingly clear." After several months of demos, Dr. Dallal found MedcomSoft Record. "It was by far the most complete system I had reviewed. Record uses Medcin® as its database, and I knew after looking at so many systems that I wanted Medcin." Medcin is a hierarchical, numerically codified nomenclature designed to facilitate the capture of qualitative and quantitative medical data at the point of care. "In my judgment, Record uses Medcin more fully than systems costing three times as much. In the end I selected Record, and I have been very happy."

"The main issue with any EMR program is: will it work for a particular doctor" says Dr. Dallal. All physicians have personal preferences when it comes to charting the patient encounter. "Most programs function in one basic way, perhaps template-based or based on previous visit information. A good system, like MedcomSoft Record, will give users multiple ways to chart," says Dr. Dallal. Record supports nine different techniques for charting in Medcin, and also supports free text and dictation. "With Record, the options seem limitless. One can very simply create pre-filled protocols, condition-specific forms, whatever is their preference, and what is more important, these variable styles access Medcin, which is an accurate and precise clinical nomenclature. For every patient I see, regardless how complex, the variables are already in the system."

## **Results:**

Dr. Dallal has become a "super-user" of MedcomSoft Record. While he selected MedcomSoft Record because of its ability to chart to the finest level of detail, he uses the full spectrum of features offered by the program. "My practice runs on MedcomSoft Record. I schedule with it, chart with it, send prescriptions online, communicate with labs, and even do my billing. Record's billing system is superior to any billing or coding software I have come into contact with." Dr. Dallal's office now completes all billing in-house, saving a great deal of money. Further, Record's integrated Referral and Authorization system has proved itself to be a valuable tool. "As you would imagine in a specialty practice, we see a great many patients on referral. Before MedcomSoft Record, we had no truly effective means to track referrals, so they would expire, and my claims would be denied. This is no longer an issue: Record fully automates that process."

**"My practice runs on  
MedcomSoft Record"**

Dr. Dallal also uses Record to involve his patients in the process of charting. "Because I have a pediatric practice, I have a workstation and wall-mounted computer monitors in every exam room. This keeps the monitors away from small hands and keeps them visible to the parents. My patients and their parents love it. I write 90 percent of the note in front of them. They can see labs being ordered or prescriptions being sent in front of their eyes."

There are a number of simple EMRs on the market. Dr. Dallal's concern is that, while it may seem easy to put clinical information into an EMR, the more important issue is how easily that information can be extracted and shared with other providers or organizations. "Some doctors might think they'd prefer a simpler tool, but down the road, those who adopt inadequate technology are going to face problems, especially as reporting requirements become more stringent," says Dr. Dallal.

"MedcomSoft Record is a solid product. It functions better than all of the other systems I researched and is designed so that information can be shared with minimal effort. I would recommend it to single doctors and to larger multi-specialty groups without hesitation," says Dr. Dallal.



## **About MedcomSoft Inc.**

MedcomSoft® is an innovative developer of software solutions that are changing the way the healthcare industry captures, manages and exchanges patient information. Through its powerful and flexible suite of products, MedcomSoft provides important tools that enable healthcare professionals to fully automate their practices and to efficiently connect to their pharmacies, laboratories, medical suppliers and insurance providers. [www.medcomsoft.com](http://www.medcomsoft.com)